

1 1. A method for displaying an electronic program guide to a viewer while
2 television programming is substantially viewable by the viewer, the method comprising:

3 a step of retrieving electronic program guide data from a data source, the
4 electronic program guide data comprising a plurality of data slices representing data
5 related to the programming;

6 a step of displaying at least one data slice of the plurality of data slices to the
7 viewer; and

8 in response to a selection by the viewer, a step of expanding the at least one data
9 slice to at least two data slices of the plurality of data slices while substantially
10 displaying the programming to the viewer.

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12 2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of data slices
13 comprises at least one element selected from the group consisting of (i) a programming
14 element, (ii) a channel element, and (iii) a time element.

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16 3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of displaying comprises
17 displaying at least one data slice on a display device.

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19 4. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the data source is remote from the
20 display device.

1 5. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising in response to a selection by
2 the viewer, a step of reducing the at least two data slices viewable to the viewer to a single data
3 slice.

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5 6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of expanding comprises
6 expanding the at least one data slice to a maximum number of viewable data slices of the
7 plurality of data slices.

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9 7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of expanding comprises
10 expanding the at least one data slice to a number of data slices defined by the viewer.

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12 8. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one data slice comprises a
13 single programming element, a single channel element, and a single time element.

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15 9. A method as recited in claim 8, wherein the step of expanding comprises
16 increasing the number of time elements viewable to the viewer.

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18 10. A method as recited in claim 8, wherein the step of expanding comprises
19 increasing the number of programming elements, channel elements, and time elements
20 viewable to the viewer.

1 11. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising a step of predicting at least
2 one data slice of the plurality of data slices that a viewer is more likely to view at a particular
3 time than others of the plurality of data slices at a particular time.
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1 12. A computer product for implementing, in a system that includes a processor and
2 a display device on which television programming can be displayed, a method of displaying an
3 electronic program guide to a viewer while television programming is substantially viewable by
4 the viewer, the computer programming product comprising:

5 a computer readable medium carrying computer-executable instructions for
6 implementing the method, wherein the computer-executable instructions, when
7 executed by the processor, cause the system to perform comprise:

8 a step of retrieving electronic program guide data from a data source, the
9 electronic program guide data comprising a plurality of data slices representing
10 data related to the programming;

11 a step of displaying at least one data slice of the plurality of data slices to
12 the viewer; and

13 in response to a selection by the viewer, a step of expanding the at least
14 one data slice to at least two data slices of the plurality of data slices while
15 substantially displaying the programming to the viewer.
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1 13. In a system that includes a processor and a display device on which video
2 program can be displayed, a method for displaying an electronic program guide in a predictive
3 manner to a viewer by way of the display device, the method comprising the acts of:

4 retrieving an electronic program guide comprising a plurality of data slices
5 representing a plurality of programs,

6 predicting at least one program of the plurality of programs that a viewer is more
7 likely to watch at a particular time than others of the plurality of programs at the
8 particular time;

9 based on the act of predicting, inserting at least one data slice representing the at
10 least one program into one or more display screens associated with the electronic
11 program guide; and

12 in response to input from the viewer selecting a particular one of the one or
13 more display screens, displaying the selected display screen, including the at least one
14 data slice, to the viewer using the display device.

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16 14. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the retrieving act comprises retrieving
17 the electronic program guide from at least one of a local data source and a remote data source.

15. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the predicting act comprises:

(a) retrieving stored demographic information associated with the viewer;
and

(b) analyzing the stored demographic information to identify at least one type of program that a viewer is more likely to watch than other types of program; and

(c) based upon the identified type of program, analyzing the available programs to identify at least one program of the plurality of programs that a viewer is more likely to watch at a particular time than others of the plurality of programs at the particular time.

16. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the predicting act comprises:

(a) retrieving stored data associated with viewing preferences of the viewer;

(b) analyzing the stored data to identify at least one type of program that a viewer is more likely to watch than other types of program; and

(c) based upon the identified type of program, analyzing the plurality of data slices to identify at least one program of the plurality of programs that a viewer is more likely to watch at a particular time than others of the plurality of programs at the particular time.

17. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the at least one data slice has a format different from substantially all other data slices inserted within the one or more display screens.

1 18. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein at least one of the one or more display
2 screens comprises an upper portion and a lower portion, the lower portion comprising one or
3 more of the plurality of data slices.

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5 19. A method as recited in claim 18, wherein the inserting act comprises inserting
6 the at least one data slice into the upper portion, the at least one data slice being a copy of one
7 of the plurality of data slices incorporated in the lower portion.

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9 20. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the at least one data slice is
10 substantially continually maintained with the at least one program.

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12 21. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein each of the plurality of data slices
13 comprises a numerical channel element, the plurality of data slices in the lower portion capable
14 of being examined by the viewer in numerical order of the numerical channel elements as the at
15 least one data slice in the upper portion remains unchanged.

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17 22. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein each of the plurality of data slices
18 comprises a numerical channel element, the plurality of data slices in the lower portion capable
19 of being examined by the viewer in numerical order of the numerical channel elements as the at
20 least one data slice in the upper portion changes based upon the plurality of data slices viewable
21 by the viewer.

1 23. A computer product for implementing, in a system that includes a processor and
2 a display device on which television programming can be displayed, a method of displaying an
3 electronic program guide in a predictive manner to a viewer by way of a display device, the
4 computer program product comprising:

5 a computer readable medium carrying computer-executable instructions for
6 implementing the method, wherein the computer-executable instructions, when
7 executed by the processor, cause the system to perform the acts of:

8 retrieving an electronic program guide comprising a plurality of data
9 slices representing a plurality of programs,

10 predicting at least one program of the plurality of programs that a viewer
11 is more likely to watch at a particular time than others of the plurality of
12 programs at the particular time;

13 based on predicting at least one program, inserting at least one data slice
14 representing the at least one program into one or more display screens associated
15 with the electronic program guide; and

16 in response to input from the viewer selecting a particular one of the one
17 or more display screens, displaying the selected display screen, including the at
18 least one data slice, to the viewer using the display device.

24. In a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display device and an input device, a method of providing and selecting from an electronic program guide on the display device, comprising the steps of:

(a) retrieving a plurality of data slices for the electronic program guide, each of the plurality of data slices representing data associated with programs that can be viewed upon the display device;

(b) displaying one of the programs on the display device and concurrently displaying one slice of the plurality of data slices representing data associated with the displayed program;

(c) receiving an electronic program guide selection signal specifying that the number of data slices displayed on the display device is to be changed; and

(d) in response to receiving the electronic program guide selection signal, changing the number of data slices displayed on the display device while continuing to display said one or the programs on the display device.

25. A method as recited in claim 24, wherein each of the plurality of data slices comprises at least one of (i) a channel element, (ii) a programming element, and (iii) a time element.

26. A method as recited in claim 25, wherein the step of changing the number of data slices displayed on the display device comprises increasing the number of data slices on a slice-by-slice basis to a maximum number of data slices.

1 27. A method as recited in claim 26, wherein the maximum number of slices is
2 definable by a viewer of the display device.

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4 28. A method as recited in claim 26, wherein the maximum number of slices is
5 definable by the computer system.

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7 29. A method as recited in claim 25, wherein the step of changing the number of
8 data slices displayed on the display device comprises decreasing the number of data slices on a
9 slice-by-slice basis.

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11 30. A method as recited in claim 24, further comprising a step of changing the
12 number of time elements displayed on the display device.

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14 31. A method as recited in claim 30, wherein the step of changing comprises
15 decreasing the number of time elements displayed on the display device.

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17 32. A method as recited in claim 30, wherein the step of changing comprises
18 increasing the number of time elements displayed on the display device.

1 33. In a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display
2 device and an input device, a method of providing and selecting an electronic program guide in
3 a predictive manner to a viewer by way of the display device, comprising the steps of:

4 (a) retrieving an electronic program guide comprising a plurality of data
5 slices representing a plurality of programs;

6 (b) displaying at least one of the plurality of data slices on the display
7 device;

8 (c) receiving an electronic program guide selection signal specifying that the
9 computer system is to predict at least one program of the plurality of programs that a
10 viewer is more likely to watch at a particular time than others of the plurality of
11 programs at the particular time;

12 (d) in response to receiving the electronic program guide selection signal,
13 predicting the at least one program of the plurality of program s that the viewer is more
14 likely to watch; and

15 (e) in response to predicting the at least one program of the plurality of
16 programs, displaying at least one data slice representing the at least one program to the
17 viewer using the display device.

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19 34. A method as recited in claim 33, wherein the displaying step comprises:

20 (a) based on the step of predicting, inserting at least one data slice
21 representing the at least one program into one or more display screens associated with
22 the electronic program guide; and

23 (b) in response to input from the viewer selecting a particular one of the one
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or more display screens, displaying the selected display screen, including the at least one data slice, to the viewer using the display device.

1 35. A method for displaying to a viewer an electronic program guide containing data
2 representing broadcast programming, the displayed data capable of being varied based upon
3 selections of the viewer, the method comprising:

4 a step of retrieving electronic program guide data from a data source, the
5 electronic program guide data comprising a plurality of data slices representing data
6 related to the broadcast programming for a plurality of time periods;

7 a step of displaying the electronic program guide data to the viewer as a single
8 column, the single column comprising at least one data slice of the plurality of data
9 slices for one of the plurality of time periods; and

10 in response to a selection by the viewer, a step of expanding the single column
11 to at least two columns comprising the plurality of data slices for the plurality of time
12 periods.

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14 36. A method as recited in claim 35, wherein each of the plurality of data slices
15 comprises at least one element selected from the group consisting of (i) a programming
16 element, (ii) a channel element, and (iii) a time element.

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18 37. A method as recited in claim 35, wherein the step of displaying comprises
19 displaying at least one data slice on a display device.

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21 38. A method as recited in claim 37, wherein the data source is remote from the
22 display device.

1 39. A method as recited in claim 35, further comprising in response to a selection by
2 the viewer, a step of reducing the at least two columns viewable to the viewer to the single
3 column.

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5 40. A method as recited in claim 35, wherein the step of expanding comprises
6 expanding the single column to a maximum number of viewable columns.

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8 41. A method as recited in claim 35, wherein the step of expanding comprises
9 expanding the single column to a number of columns defined by the viewer.

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11 42. A method as recited in claim 35, wherein one of the plurality of data slices
12 comprises a single programming element, a single channel element, and a single time element.

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14 43. A method as recited in claim 42, wherein the step of expanding comprises
15 increasing the number of programming elements, channel elements, and time elements
16 viewable to the viewer.

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18 44. A method as recited in claim 35, further comprising a step of predicting at least
19 one data slice of the plurality of data slices that a viewer is more likely to view at a particular
20 time than others of the plurality of data slices at a particular time.

1 45. A computer product for implementing, in a system that includes a processor and
2 a display device on which television programming can be displayed, a method for displaying to
3 a viewer an electronic program guide containing data representing broadcast programming, the
4 displayed data capable of being varied based upon selections of the viewer, the computer
5 programming product comprising:

6 a computer readable medium carrying computer-executable instructions for
7 implementing the method, wherein the computer-executable instructions, when
8 executed by the processor, cause the system to perform comprise:

9 a step of retrieving electronic program guide data from a data source, the
10 electronic program guide data comprising a plurality of data slices representing
11 data related to the broadcast programming for a plurality of time periods;

12 a step of displaying the electronic program guide data to the viewer as a
13 single column, the single column comprising at least one data slice of the
14 plurality of data slices for one of the plurality of time periods; and

15 in response to a selection by the viewer, a step of expanding the single
16 column to at least two columns comprising the plurality of data slices for the
17 plurality of time periods.

1 46. In a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display
2 device and an input device, a method of providing and selecting from an electronic program
3 guide on the display device, comprising the steps of:

4 (a) retrieving electronic program guide data from a data source, the
5 electronic program guide data representing data related to the broadcast programming
6 for a plurality of time periods;

7 (b) displaying the electronic program guide data for a single time period to
8 the viewer as a single column;

9 (c) receiving an electronic program guide selection signal specifying that the
10 number of time periods displayed on the display device is to be changed; and

11 (d) in response to receiving the electronic program guide selection signal,
12 changing the number of time periods and the number of columns displayed on the
13 display device.

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15 47. A method as recited in claim 46, wherein the number of time periods displayed
16 on the display device is definable by the viewer of the display device.

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18 48. A method as recited in claim 46, wherein the number of time periods displayed
19 on the display device is definable by the computer system.

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21 49. A method as recited in claim 46, wherein the step of changing the number of
22 columns comprises increasing the number of columns on a column-by-column basis.

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50. A method as recited in claim 46, wherein the step of changing the number of columns comprises decreasing the number of columns on a column-by-column basis